

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00502 290707Z

15

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-11 ACDA-05 /091 W
----- 080747

R 290615Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6057

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, AG, MO, SS

SUBJECT: ASAD SENDS ENVOYS TO MOROCCO AND ALGERIA

1. DAMASCUS RADIO ANNOUNCED EARLY AFTERNOON JAN. 28 THAT PRES. ASAD HAD DISPATCHED DEPPRIMIN HAYDAR AND CHIEF OF STAFF SHIHABI TO MOROCCO AND ALGERIA CARRYING MESSAGES CONNECTED WITH EXPLOSIVE SITUATION AND OUTBREAK OF FIGHTING YESTERDAY.

2. MORNING PRESS JAN. 28 CARRIED BRIEF ITEM THAT BOUMEDIENE AND ASAD HAD TELEPHONE CONVERSATION PREVIOUS EVENING ON SITUATION OF TENSION BETWEEN ALGERIA AND MOROCCO.

3. COMMENT: ASAD WOULD NOT HAVE SENT ENVOYS OF THIS STATURE, FOR BOTH ARE MEMBERS OF HIS INNER CIRCLE UNLESS HE CONSIDERED MISSION OF HIGH IMPORTANCE.

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HE PULLED SHIHABI OFF OF LEBANESE MEDIATION EFFORT

FOR TASK. SYRIA'S POSITION ON SAHARA HAS BEEN TO
ENCOURAGE MAGHREB LEADERS TO SETTLE PROBLEM PEACEABLY
WITHIN FRAMEWORK WHICH WOULD PRESERVE UNITY (75 DAMASCUS 4232).
THIS POSITION NO DOUBT IRRITATES ALGERIANS WHO MIGHT
REASONABLY EXPECT MORE FROM "REVOLUTIONARY" ARAB
BROTHER, BUT FACT THAT MOROCCAN AND SYRIAN TROOPS
FOUGHT SIDE BY SIDE IN OCTOBER '73 WAR ALSO INFLUENCES
SYRIAN POLICY. A FURTHER CONSIDERATION IN DESPATCHING
ENVOYS MAY BE THAT ASAD HEARD OF CAIRO'S MEDIATION
EFFORT AND DOES NOT WISH TO LEAVE SADAT AN OPEN
FIELD.
MURPHY

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